Status of Plantation Industry

4291. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that coffee, tea and rubber enjoy the status of plantation industry;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government propose to give the same status to oilpalm, cashew and horticulture for better competitive advantage; and

(c) if so, by when such a decision is likely to be taken and if not, reasons thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) It is felt that farmers can pool their existing holdings to obtain the benefits of large scale production.

Competitive Global Markets for Agricultural Products

4292. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that global markets for agricultural products are becoming more competitive;

(b) whether it is also a fact that a partnership of farmers, producers and exporters is necessary to achieve a breakthrough in those markets; and

(c) if so, steps Government propose to take in this direction ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) It is the strategy of the Government to step up production and productivity so as to generate exportable surpluses in the agricultural sector. Spices Board, Tobacco Board and the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) are agencies handling work relating to promoting and enhancing exports of various agricultural commodities. Interest of farmers/ producers and exporters are represented in the Boards of these organisations. Besides, co-operative organisations like the National Agricultural Co-operative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED), The Tribal Co-operative Marketing Development Federation of India Ltd. (TRIFED), and the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB), are also active in this export effort.

Guidelines for Foreign Collaborations and Joint Ventures

4293. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that PHD Chambers of Commerce and Industry have urged Government to issue comprehensive guidelines for foreign collaborations and joint ventures;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereon;

(c) whether Government propose to adopt any new guideline for foreign collaborations and joint ventures; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the House.

Tea Plantation on Experimental Basis

4294. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the places in Orissa where the tea plantation has started on experimental basis;

(b) whether the experiment has proved economically viable; and

(c) if so, the steps taken to bring additional hectares of land in that State under tea plantation ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) and (b) Tea plantation was started in the Keonjhar District of Orissa in the year 1984. This garden is run by M/s. Orissa Tea Plantation Ltd. and so far 213 hectares of the area has been brought und-